

**Draft Minutes**  
**HOMETOWN SECURITY STUDY COMMITTEE**

**June 4, 2003, 1145 hours**

**Members Present:** Chair General Stanley Heng, Carol Brown, Oscar Rios Pohirieth, Jim Geist, Don Marti, Jeff Fortenberry, Annette McRoy, Ken Svoboda, Larry Hudkins, Doug Ahlberg, Julie Righter, Tom Casady, Mike Spadt, Bruce Dart

**Not in Attendance:** Major Guy Moon

**City Staff & Other Public Present:** Jeff Cole (Staff), Corrie Kielty (Staff), Darrell Podany (Council Office), Nate Jenkins (Lincoln Journal Star), Hobart Boswell (Fire/EMS Study Group), Mike Miriovsky, EMS Inc., Jason Scott (Person Fitchett Law Firm), Assistant Chief Rich Furasek (Fire Department)

**Approval of Minutes**

General Heng called for approval of the minutes of the May 28th meeting. **Ken Svoboda moved approval of the minutes, seconded by Larry Hudkins. Motion carried by unanimous vote.**

**Work Group Reports**

The order of business at today's meeting centered around discussing and voting on the remaining recommendations proposed by the Fire Department subcommittee, as well as three general recommendations made by the Hometown Security Committee. Each recommendation was reviewed and voted upon individually.

**Fire Department:** Doug Ahlberg reported for the Fire/EMS Workgroup

Approved at last week's meeting was amending Recommendation #4 to reduce the ratio from 1.5 to 1.3 firefighters per 1000 residents. Recommendation #4 as amended was not voted on at last week's meeting.

After approval of that amendment, Jim Geist made a motion to amend Recommendation #4 to eliminate using a ratio and to use language that says to staff and fund sufficiently to meet goals established by the Committee. The motion was seconded by Larry Hudkins.

During discussions following that motion, motion was made by Jim Geist, seconded by Oscar Rios Pohirieth to send Recommendation #4 back to the subcommittee. Since the subcommittee did not have any additional meetings scheduled, that motion was then withdrawn. Further discussion of Recommendation #4 was then tabled until today's meeting.

**The second amendment to Recommendation #4, made in the form of a motion by Jim Geist and seconded by Larry Hudkins to eliminate the use of a ratio and to use language to staff and fund sufficiently to meet goals established by the Committee stands.**

During further discussions at today's meeting, Don Marti said that a ratio had been established

for the Police Department, and he felt both departments should be treated the same. He also had a concern that this amendment says that goals that are established will be funded. Mike Spadt concurred that the recommendation should be consistent and not different for Fire and Police. Chief Casady said both departments need to be staffed to deliver the kinds of services the citizens of Lincoln expect. To do that, goals need to be set out. Jeff Fortenberry said he would rather focus on issues that are operational in nature rather than a number that means various things. Ken Svoboda said he does not support using a ratio.

**General Heng called for a vote on the amendment to eliminate the use of a ratio and use language to staff and fund sufficiently to meet goals established by the Committee. Voting in favor of the amendment Brown, Fortenberry, Svoboda, Geist, Hudkins. Those opposed, Marti, McRoy, Ahlberg, Spadt, Casady, Righter, Dart Heng. Motion defeated.**

**General Heng then called for a vote on Recommendation #4 as previously amended to a ratio of 1.3 firefighters per 1000 residents. Voting in favor Rios Pohirieth, Marti, McRoy, Ahlberg, Spadt, Casady, Righter, Dart, Heng. Those opposed, Brown, Hudkins, Svoboda, Geist, Fortenberry. Motion carried.**

**Recommendation #5: The Fire/EMS workgroup recommends that Lincoln Fire and Rescue services should have administrative control over all fire inspection, public education and fire prevention staff that are currently coordinated in the Department of Building and Safety.**

There are six Fire Inspectors currently under the umbrella of the Firefighters Association who report to the Department of Building and Safety but at an incident report to the LFR Incident Commander. They do inspections and investigate the cause and origin of fires and bomb incidents. Chief Spadt said one of the most proactive things the Fire Department can do is public education, and the Fire Inspectors are underutilized in that respect. Jeff Fortenberry asked if the Fire Prevention staff could serve a dual role and be equipped as firefighters. Chief Spadt said their job description could be enhanced to include other things such as public education, which would then free up a member of a suppression team. The Fire Inspectors would remain where they are in Building and Safety and the same fees could be charged, but they would report and receive direction from the Fire Department.

**Motion by Ken Svoboda to amend Recommendation #5 to read as follows: The Fire/EMS workgroup recommends that the City of Lincoln explore the possibility of Lincoln Fire and Rescue having administrative control over all fire inspection, public education and fire prevention staff that are currently coordinated in the Department of Building and Safety. Seconded by Chief Casady.**

Carol Brown was concerned about moving the Fire Inspectors from the Building and Safety Department without input from that Department's Director. She felt this is something that should be worked out between the two departments. Ken Svoboda said the Mayor would be the one who would make the decision to move the Fire Inspectors from one department to another.

**General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of the motion Brown,**

**Hudkins, Svoboda, Casady, Righter, Dart, Heng. Those opposed, Marti, McRoy, Geist, Rios Pohirieth, Fortenberry, Ahlberg, Spadt. Motion did not pass.**

**Motion by Jeff Fortenberry that the Lincoln Fire and Rescue services consider assuming administrative control of fire inspection, public education and fire prevention staff that are currently coordinated in the Department of Building and Safety. Seconded by Don Marti. General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of the motion Rios Pohirieth, Marti, McRoy, Hudkins, Svoboda, Casady, Righter, Geist, Fortenberry, Ahlberg, Spadt, Dart, Heng. Those opposed, Brown. Motion carried.**

**Recommendation #6: The Fire/EMS workgroup recommends that the City enact the Capital Improvement Program budget requests submitted by the Fire Department for fiscal years 2003-04 for the safety of the citizens of Lincoln and the Department staff.**

Doug Ahlberg said the subcommittee reviewed all of the items in the budget and it was their recommendation to approve the requests as submitted. Chief Spadt said the CIP budget is 23 items/\$14 million dollars; the same items requested through the bond issue. There was considerable discussion regarding this recommendation. Jim Geist did not feel he was qualified to make recommendations on the Capital Improvement budget. Don Marti said the Committee established the goals as far as response time and compliance with standards. He felt it was up to the Mayor to determine whether or not the budget meets or makes progress toward those goals. Chief Casady said his idea of a Capital Improvement project is either a very large dollar amount expense for the city or something durable like real estate. Other replacement items, like vehicles or radios he considers part of the regular operating budget. Ken Svoboda said he would like to see building and maintenance go back into the bond issue for the general public, and things like radios go in the general budget.

**Motion by Doug Ahlberg to approve Recommendation #6 as written. There was no second.**

**Motion by Chief Casady to adopt the following recommendation. The Hometown Security Committee recommends that the City plan during its budget process to meet the Capital Outlay and Capital Improvement needs identified in the Lincoln Fire and Rescue Project Summary 2003. Seconded by Chief Spadt.**

Chief Casady said this motion states that the Committee has reviewed the needs and are going on record as saying they believe these items are important and legitimate and ought to be given serious consideration by the City during its normal budget processes. There is no particular timeline involved and they may be in the plan for years before funding makes them a reality.

Bruce Dart left the meeting at 1255 hours and Ken Svoboda left the meeting at 1300 hours during the discussions and before a vote on the motion.

**General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of the motion Rios Pohirieth, Marti, Casady, Righter, Hudkins, Geist, Ahlberg, Spadt, Heng. Those opposed, Brown. Abstained McRoy, Fortenberry. Motion carried.**

**Recommendation #7: The Fire/EMS workgroup recommends that the County Board should fund an interoperable communication system for all emergency systems within Lancaster County with consideration of interoperability with other jurisdictions.**

**Motion by Larry Hudkins, seconded by Jim Geist to approve Recommendation #7. General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of the motion Brown, Rios Pohirieth, Marti, Hudkins, McRoy, Casady, Righter, Geist, Fortenberry, Ahlberg, Spadt, Heng. None opposed. Motion carried.**

**Recommendation #8: The Fire/EMS workgroup recommends that Lincoln Fire and Rescue consider stationing ambulances on the periphery of the city to improve response times to the county while maintaining response times in the city.**

**Motion by Jim Geist to approve Recommendation #8, seconded by Jeff Fortenberry.**

This could be done by co-locating with a Police Department substation. Refer to Use of Police Substations Recommendation #1 previously approved by the Committee. Don Marti asked if there was a cost to do this; would it be at the expense of the city. Chief Spadt said the recommendation by the workgroup was to improve response time to the county and if he can move a unit from one location to another and not increase the response time in the city, he is willing to do that.

**General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of the motion Brown, Rios Pohirieth, Marti, McRoy, Hudkins, Casady, Righter, Geist, Fortenberry, Ahlberg, Spadt, Heng. None opposed. Motion carried.**

#### **General Recommendations of the Hometown Security Study Committee**

General Heng said that during meetings of the Hometown Security Committee, the following general recommendations were made that need to be acted upon.

**Recommendation #1: The Hometown Security Study Committee strongly recommends that the City Council and the Mayor carefully examine current budget priorities to ensure that the first responsibility of our local government, protecting the lives and well being of all Lincoln's citizens, is identified as the first priority in this and future budgets.**

**Motion by Jim Geist to amend Recommendation #1 to strike the word "first" responsibility and replace "the first" priority with "a top" priority. Seconded by Carol Brown. General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of the motion Brown, Rios Pohirieth, Marti, McRoy, Hudkins, Casady, Righter, Geist, Fortenberry, Ahlberg, Spadt, Heng. None opposed. Motion carried.**

Annette McRoy left the meeting at 1317 hours.

**Recommendation #2: The Hometown Security Study Committee challenges our elected officials to provide the united leadership necessary to engage our community in a broad based, multi-faceted dialogue about the need to provide the adequate, stable sources of funding (both from the general fund budget and general obligation bonds) our first responders require to meet the expectations of our community.**

**Motion by Don Marti to approve Recommendation #2, seconded by Jim Geist. General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of the motion Brown, Rios Pohirieth, Marti, Hudkins, Casady, Righter, Geist, Fortenberry, Ahlberg, Spadt, Heng. None opposed. Motion carried.**

**Recommendation #3: The Hometown Security Study Committee recommends that the City explore new and more effective ways to educate the community about the emergency/public safety services it currently provides, specifically those provided by the Fire Department (including EMS services), the Police Department and the 911 Emergency Communications Center and, simultaneously, to explore new and more effective ways to communicate the need to enhance and expand these services as the City grows to an increasingly diverse and sophisticated population.**

Corrie Kielty said the purpose of this recommendation was to address the present needs to make everything more efficient. Citizens of Lincoln need to understand what the first responder agencies do and what their issues, problems and challenges are.

**Motion by Don Marti to strike everything in the recommendation beginning with the word simultaneously to the end of the recommendation and to replace with “and their future needs and challenges”. Seconded by Carol Brown.**

**General Heng called for a vote on the motion. Voting in favor of the motion Brown, Rios Pohirieth, Marti, Hudkins, Casady, Righter, Geist, Fortenberry, Ahlberg, Spadt, Heng. None opposed. Motion carried.**

Jeff Fortenberry thanked General Heng for coordinating the Hometown Security Study Committee, and for being able to maintain good personal relationship during discussions of issues where there were disagreements.

General Heng will work with Jeff Cole to prepare the final report. It will be provided to each Committee Member by email or US mail and he asked that members provide their vote of approval or disapproval of the final report.

Carol Brown asked that the issues of the Bomb Squad be addressed somehow in the final report and forwarded to the Mayor.

Meeting adjourned at 1326 hours.

Submitted by:

Virginia Fischer